

ried survey of the surroundings, "but they'll be back again."

With no show of timidity the teacher produced her key and proceeded to unlock the door, but the key would not enter the lock—the keyhole was filled with a wooden plug.

"Them Jinks fellows did it," was the unanimous declaration of the scholars, and the opinion of the teacher, too.

"You must get this piece of wood out of this," said Miss Shigbee, calmly, and asked Wilton Chaire, "Have you a knife?"

"Yes, here it is," and he opened it and passed it to her.

For a full half hour the teacher worked to remove the obstacle, but with no success, and when about to give up and send for the services of some man, there came a loud thump upon the door from the inside, and the plug flew out, a key turned in the lock, and the door was thrown wide open; and confronting her stood a young man fairly six feet tall.

"Walk right in, Miss What's-your-name, an' make yourself at home. I'm sorry you're so late gettin' here to start the school," and he made a profound bow as he stepped to one side to let her pass. "But if you don't get here earlier in the future we'll have to be gettin' another teacher."

"Good morning, Mr. Bohly; I am glad you got here so early, and hope I may always find you so punctual in your attendance," answered the teacher as she passed into the room, and the two dimly lighted men or a dozen other young men seated at the desks, and apparently studiously at work, although the shutters were closed and the room but dimly lighted.

(To be continued.)

An Interesting Question Concerning Abraham Lincoln

BY ADA MAE WILBERT

COMING INTO THE world as Abraham Lincoln's early life with the boys of the present time, there arises the question, How was it he became President of the United States? How is it "our boys" with golden opportunities accomplish so little? Even those who graduate from high schools and colleges know very little and often are puzzled over the simplest questions. What is the trouble? You answer they find good teachers, and books—your eyes quickly see piles of beautiful, entertaining, instructive books, gay with bindings and pictures, read at command; not careless, you say, "O, they know so little."

By investigating matters it is learned that "our boys" are giving their best attention to dancing, card-playing, and smoking, pleasures unknown to Abraham Lincoln. The true spent by "our boys" in sowing wild oats, so to speak, was Abraham Lincoln's precious moments for reading and studying. Many a boy furnished with no better light than Abraham Lincoln had for reading would have ended his existence by suicide, the light was not sufficient for his wants. Abraham Lincoln did not think about what he was denied, but put forth his best efforts to be a noted man.

"Our boys" frequently get discouraged when they cannot continue their studies at school, college or university, and, giving up cherished plans, they have no ambition for filling any position in life. Would they dream of being the President of the United States if they had been permitted to attend school only a few months of their life?

The question again presents itself, How was it that Abraham Lincoln filled the highest office in our country with great honor? Some one, not acquainted with the people who lived in 1860, has said that he had no good material from which to select a President in those times. A little study on the subject will reveal there were rich men, educated men, and talented men who would have considered it a great honor to have served the people of the United States. Considering only three characteristics that aided in making Abraham Lincoln a noble man, we can readily see how he secured his high calling. He was a good man, he was an honest man, and he was a truthful man.

Abraham Lincoln being favored with a deep, broad, living conscience that told him what was good, bad, right, and wrong, he made no mistake in his decision. He loved his mother, and when she died and was buried under the shade of a spreading and majestic sycamore he worried because there was no man of God to conduct funeral ceremonies, and shortly afterward he asked the great favor of Parson Elkin,

the Kentucky preacher, to come over one hundred miles to preach a sermon over the grave of his mother. The boy truly loved his mother when he put forth this great effort to have a memorial sermon preached. I fancy I see the little ten-year-old boy writing and rewriting the letter, being the first one he ever wrote, to Mr. Elkin. No matter how poorly it was written or how poor, it conveyed the desired message, and whether it was the sense of the letter or the great love the boy manifested for his mother, the good parson came some seven



or eight months afterward and preached the desired sermon at the grave of Mrs. Nancy Lincoln in the presence of some two hundred persons. The trouble with many of our young men to-day is that they do not honor their parents and will not be taught by them. O that we might hear them saying the words of Abraham Lincoln, "All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother." Abraham Lincoln's greatest pleasure was studying, but he never neglected his task, however unattractive. He early learned the use of the ax, the maul, and the wedge. The true rule of his life was to do one's level best, leaving the rest to take care of itself. Splitting rails and billets of wood hardened his views and exercised his whole being, so that he needed no gymnastic practice.

Abraham Lincoln never added himself to any of the rude views of his day. When a boy he disliked profanity, and when he became President he often tried to reason with men about his awful sin, and when they would not listen to him in a becoming manner they were dismissed from his presence.

Abraham Lincoln was a temperance man. It is stated that he never, even to the day of his death, could be induced to partake of spirits or wine. Was it because he was not tempted? No, indeed! During his early life often after delighting his friends with jests and stories they would ask him to drink, but he always refused. Even when he received the nomination of the presidency he held firmly to his views with which he started life. He is to be honored for his courage in returning the wines sent him at the announcement of his nomination. Who would do it today? The politician of the present time is afraid to do this or that for fear of offending his influential friends. O that more men might learn how miserable life is made by drunkenness and moderate tippling, and would become not to drink! So one can see the fact but that Abraham Lincoln and his friends were better prepared to transact business by drinking the spring water than any other body of men who had similar duties to perform.

Abraham Lincoln was an honest man. There are a great many honest people who do questionable acts in business. How few merchants and clerks are met to-day like Abraham Lincoln! It is remembered when he was managing Offutt's store in New Salem that late one night he found when counting his cash that he had taken a few cents from a customer more than was due, and when he closed the store he walked a long distance to make good the deficiency. What would our young men do? In many cases mistakes are not corrected, especially when it means a long walk after dark to return the money. Merchants and clerks may laugh at Abraham Lincoln weighing a little ten-cent was due a woman and carrying it to her when he discovered he had weighed out too little for her because a wrong weight had been placed on the scales. Did I hear some one say, "That was real too far. I would never do that?" Shall we make a little

prophecy? If many mistakes in weights and measures are corrected by business men, will you enjoy long prosperity? Only to-day I was asked where my people buy butter; my answer was given; and the remark followed, "I did buy of — (one of the best established stores in the country), but every order they filled for me there was an ounce or two less in the weight. I would not stand that, did not say anything to them, but I buy somewhere else now. They have good butter, O!" The store is well equipped with civil, patient, alert clerks to handle the best branded goods, and one would think it was just the place to go to as the wealthy gentleman I have referred to buys at the store where he can get good weight, so there are many others who do the same. The merchant may laugh and consider himself very successful at the tricks he plays, but in time he may find, when it is too late, that he has lost many persons to his wits.

How much of the anxiety and crime of this world might be averted if people were only honest! There were times when Abraham Lincoln might have been very much embarrassed if he had not held sacred what he was intrusted with. Take for instance, the time when as agent of the Post Office Department hunted him up and demanded the small balance due to the government from the New Salem post office. A friend, who was with Mr. Lincoln, feared he could not account for the funds and called him over and offered to loan him the sum required; but Abraham Lincoln, going to his sleeping room, brought out an old stocking and, untying it, poured on the table the exact amount, just as it had been paid to him in pennies and silver pieces. Not a few times had he been in bitter want and hard-pressed for money; nevertheless, he would not touch the receipts of the little post office.

Abraham Lincoln was a truthful man. Frequently we hear, "Mankind will out; sooner or later the truth will appear." These sayings meant no fear to Abraham Lincoln. If he had not been truthful he might have been annoyed when the truth was revealed, like many to-day. For example, if he had not told Mr. Crawford the truth just how he played the book of The Life of Washington into a chink in the log wall of the cabin (going to sleep after the "tallow dip" had burned down) and the driving storm in the night ruined it. In spite of it being a hard task for him to meet Mr. Crawford and tell him of what had happened to the much prized borrowed book, he did not hesitate to tell the truth and offer his services to do what was fair and just in settlement.

Abraham Lincoln never misrepresented the truth. Whether he told of his early life or gave any particulars he spoke the truth without hesitancy. Whatever he pretended to be he was. The reason but few people are successful to-day is because they are not genuine and sincere. People speaking to you claim to have your interest at heart, but when absent they prove they are working in a direction that is not beneficial to you, and when the true state of affairs is known you are so disappointed that you lose confidence in humanity. Only the other day, while doing some writing and assisting a certain party, I was receiving compliments and promises, and within two days I was done a great injustice by the very same party. When people act so unfaithful how are they going to succeed? Suppose my acquaintance had been running for President of the United States, do you think I would be justified in casting my vote for a candidate who was not reliable? The instability of the present generation is noticed continually.

Abraham Lincoln was unlike the people who are swayed from one opinion to another. Recall, if you please, when Roger B. Taney, Chief Justice of the United States, died in 1864, Mr. Lincoln's immediate friends remonstrated against Mr. Chase succeeding Mr. Taney, but Mr. Lincoln replied, "My friends all over the country are trying to put up the bars between me and Governor Chase. I have a vast number of messages and letters, from men who think they are my friends, imploring and warning me not to appoint him." Ceasing to speak for a moment, he pointed to a pile of telegrams and letters on the table and he said, "Now, I know manner things about Governor Chase than any of those men can tell me, but I am going to nominate him." He did not express himself in favor of their proposition or make any apology for his actions, and these addressed him he would do as he had said; so when Governor Chase's appointment

was made three days later there was no disappointment. May the day soon come when everyone shall be inspired to make truthfulness a characteristic of their lives!

Was not Abraham Lincoln chosen President of the United States because he possessed those sterling qualities that rendered him a noble man? Would he have stood the test of the severest trials, no matter, if they came without warning there is no danger to fear. May it be realized that it is possible for us to be just as good, just as honest, and just as truthful as Abraham Lincoln!



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